

# **Abandoned Mine Safety Fund Annual Report**

November 15, 2002

## **Statutory Authority:**

### **ARS §27-129: Locating abandoned mines**

- A. ... the state mine inspector shall establish a program to locate, inventory, classify and eliminate public safety hazards at abandoned mines ...

### **In addition, ARS § 27-131: Abandoned mines safety fund; annual report**

- A. ...the abandoned mines safety fund is established consisting of:
  - 1. Gifts, grants, and contributions specifically designated for the fund.
  - 2. Monies that may be appropriated by the legislature to the fund to match the gifts, grants and contributions based on the preceding year's expenditure report required under subsection D of this section
- B. The state mine inspector shall administer the fund. Monies in the fund are exempt from lapsing pursuant to section 35-190.
- C. Monies in the fund are continuously appropriated to the inspector to ensure public safety at abandoned mines on land owned by this state as provided by section 27-129. The inspector shall use monies in the fund to pay contractors for actual abatement costs to fill, fence or plug shafts and adits and not to pay administrative salaries and other costs. The inspector shall consult with the state land commissioner to identify and prioritize the abandoned mine sites on state lands to be considered for abatement.
- D. Each year the inspector shall submit an annual report to the joint legislative budget committee on or before December 1 concerning the expenditure of monies from the fund and contributions to the fund during the preceding fiscal year. The report shall itemize each expense paid from the fund and shall describe the actions taken to ensure public safety.

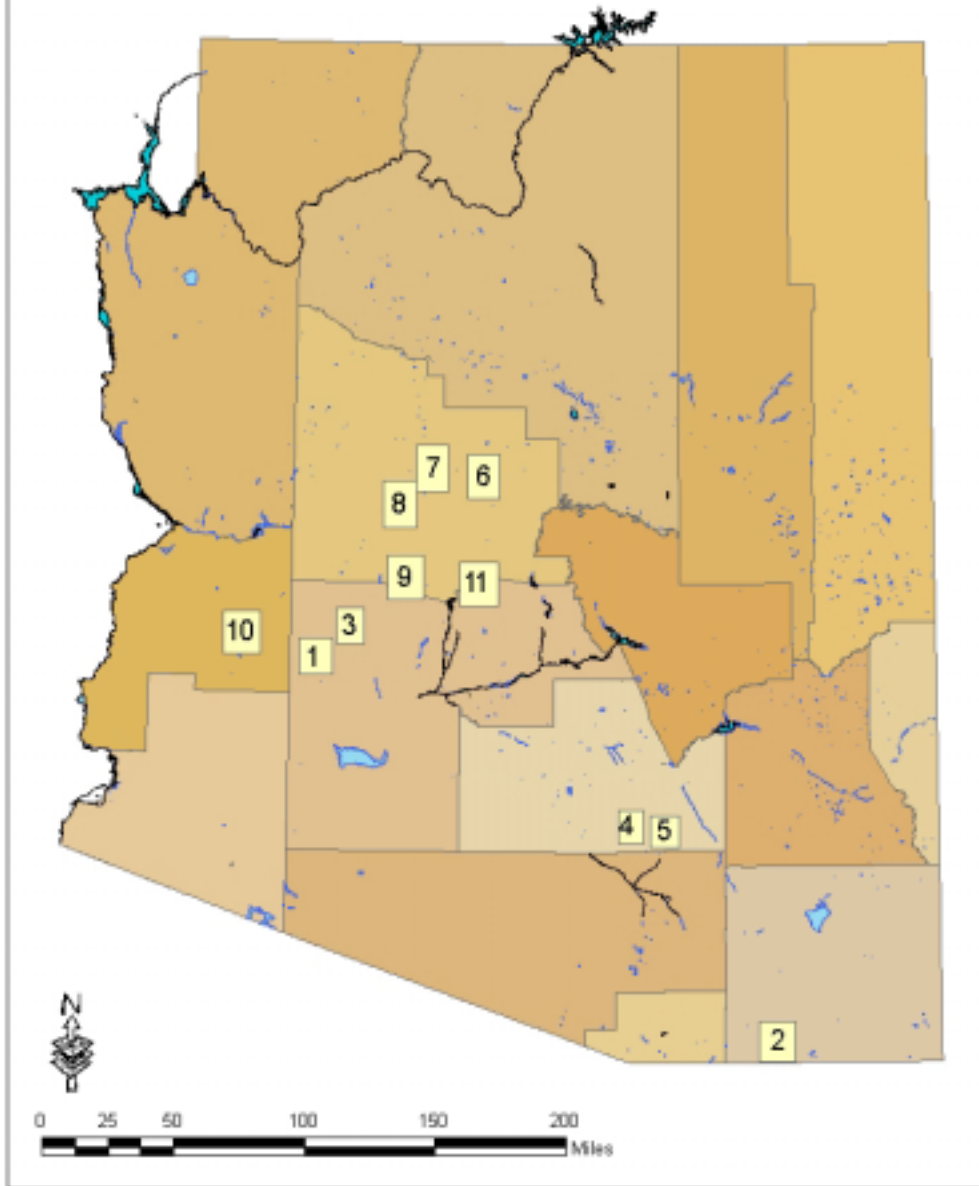
**Financial Statement:**

The following is a summary of financial transactions during State Fiscal years 1999 through 2002:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Closure</b>	<b>Entity</b>
Starting Balance, July 1, 1998	\$0		
Deposits, February 1999	\$50,000		Contributions from: ASARCO BHP Cyprus Phelps Dodge
Expenditure	-\$7,850	Cave Creek Area Closure: fill shafts and re-contour surface ( <i>Not Shown on Priority Map<sup>*</sup></i> )	Four Corners Environmental
Balance, June 30, 1999	\$42,150		
Deposit, July 1, 1999	\$30,000		FY2000 General Fund Appropriation
Expenditure	-\$1,830	Fencing of Pinal County Mines, three openings fenced ( <i>Priority Sites 4 &amp; 5<sup>*</sup></i> )	DTH Enterprises
Expenditure	-\$951	Fencing of La Paz County Mines, five openings fenced ( <i>Priority Site 10<sup>*</sup></i> )	DTH Enterprises
Expenditure	-\$3,240	Fencing of Black Canyon/New River Area Mines, nine openings fenced ( <i>Priority Site 12<sup>*</sup></i> )	DTH Enterprises
Balance, June 30, 2000	\$66,129		
Deposit, July 1, 2000	\$30,000		FY2001 General Fund Appropriation
Expenditure	-\$3,867	Fencing of Mayer Mines, three openings fenced ( <i>Priority Site 6<sup>*</sup></i> )	MCO Mine Services
Expenditure	-\$18,900	Fencing of Humboldt and Prescott Mines, 29 openings fenced ( <i>Priority Site 7<sup>*</sup></i> )	ACT Tech Environmental
Expenditure	-\$26,900	Fencing of King Midas Mine, Morgan Butte Mines, Lucky Cuss Mine and other Wickenburg area Mines, 35 openings fenced ( <i>Priority Sites 3, 8 &amp; 9<sup>*</sup></i> )	ACT Tech Environmental
Expenditure	-\$31,690	Gating, Grating, Fencing and Filling of Tonopah Belmont Mine, two bat gates, two ventilation grates, one iron fence, one backfill and road bollards ( <i>Priority Site 1<sup>*</sup></i> )	Primatech, LLC Engineers & Consultants
Balance, June 30, 2001	\$14,772		
Deposit, July 1, 2001	\$0		FY2002 General Fund Appropriation
Expenditure	-\$9,957	Repair of Tonopah Belmont bat gate following vandalism and fatality ( <i>Priority Site 1<sup>*</sup></i> )	Marion Vittetoe
Balance, June 30, 2002	\$4,815		

<sup>\*</sup>Refers to Priority Sites Map on following page

## Abandoned Mine Safety Fund Priority Sites 1999-2001



1. Tonopah-Belmont Mine, Maricopa County
2. Charleston Lead Mine, Cochise, County
3. Lucky Cuss Mine, Maricopa County
4. Desert Peak Mines, Pinal County
5. North of Oracle Shaft, Pinal County
6. Mayer Shafts, Yavapai County
7. Prescott and Humboldt Mines, Yavapai County
8. King Midas Mine, Yavapai County
9. Morgan Butte Mines, Yavapai County
10. Salome Road Mines, La Paz County
11. New River-Black Canyon Mines

**Completed June 2001, Repaired June 2002**  
**Project Cancelled March 2001**  
**Fenced June 2001**  
**Fenced June 2000**  
**Fenced June 2000**  
**Fenced November 2000**  
**Fenced March 2001**  
**Fenced June 2001**  
**Fenced June 2001**  
**Fenced June 2000**  
**Fenced June 2000**

## **Activity in Fiscal Year 2002**

### **Tonopah Belmont Mine**

In 2001, the McNeil Tunnel was secured with a locked barricade which allowed emergency rescue access to internal workings if needed. The stope opening above the tunnel was fenced with a six-foot metal fence having a curved top to deter explorers from climbing into the mine. A shallow, garbage filled shaft at the west end of the waste pile was backfilled after the garbage was removed. On the east side of the mountain, a shallow adit was gated to allow occasional bat access. On the north side of the mountain, two shafts connected to the workings were covered with grates to retain airflow and allow additional bat access. The contractor for the project was Primatex and the subcontractor was Empire Fence. The total cost for the remediation was just under \$32,000.

On June 16, 2002, a group of four-wheelers visited the area around the McNeil Tunnel. As the group was preparing to leave they noticed one of their group was missing. They believed the missing man had entered the tunnel, crawled beneath the vandalized barricade and was lost in the mine. They contacted the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office and the Search and Rescue team was dispatched to the site. The rescue team began a difficult and dangerous search of the mine. The young man's body was finally discovered at the bottom of a 400 ft deep internal vertical shaft. At considerable risk to the rescuers, the victim's body was recovered from the shaft bottom. Prior to falling into the shaft, the victim had to breach two barriers designed to prevent entry and warn of danger. This unnecessary death was a tragic conclusion to the victim's determined efforts to explore a dangerous abandoned mine.

The investigation following the accident revealed a cross member of the original barricade had been forced free, possibly by the use of a hydraulic car jack. Numerous bullet holes pockmarked the padlock and barricade cross members from failed attempts to force the padlock open.

Emergency procurement procedures were initiated to design and install a more "robust" closure of the McNeil Tunnel. The barricade must prevent entry by humans, but still maintain critical ventilation to the large population bat habitat within the mine..

Installation of the new barricade was completed on July 22, 2002. The new barricade was constructed of three inch square-section structural steel tubing filled with high strength grout to resist gunfire, bending by portable jacks and cutting by portable power saws and acetylene cutting torches. The cost for the removal of the old barricade and installation of the new barricade was \$9,957.

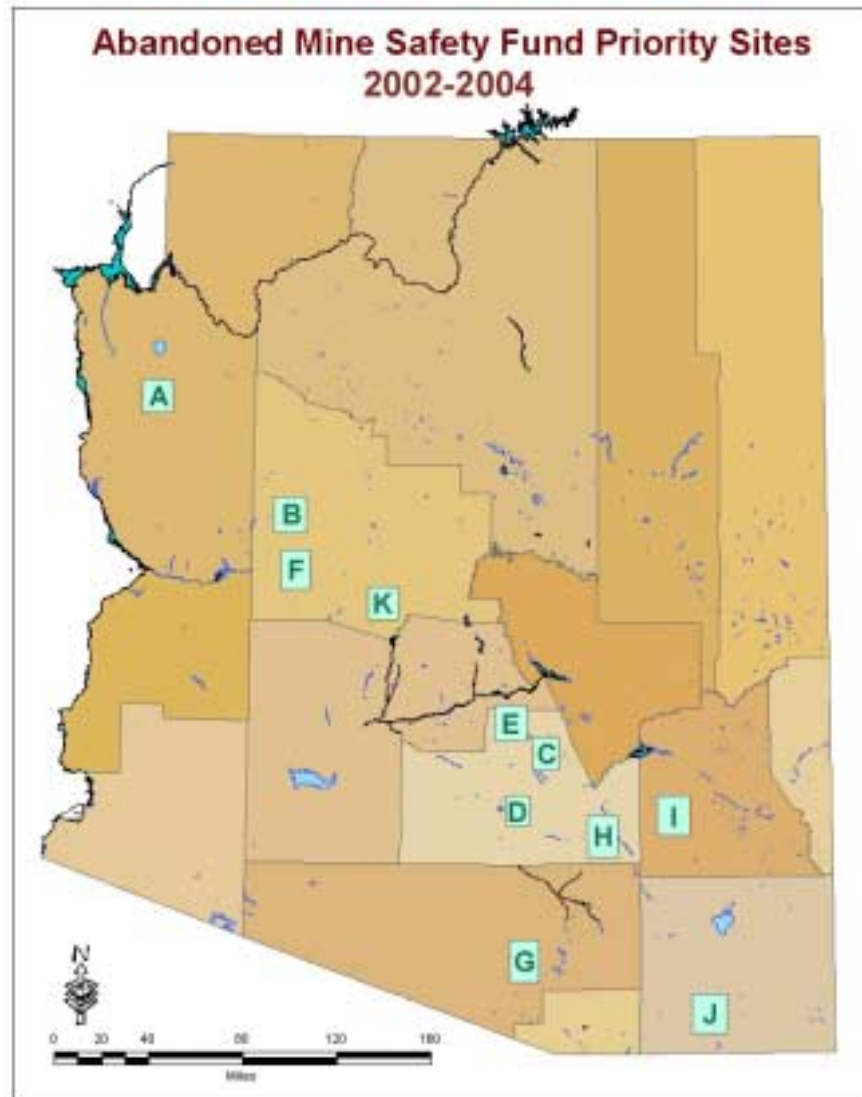


Vandalized Original Barricade



New Barricade

**Summary of Future Projects:**



<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Expected Timeline</b>	<b>Estimated Project Costs Required from Safety Fund</b>
<b>A</b>	Chloride Mines	Mohave	Pending Funding	\$50,000
<b>B</b>	Bagdad Area Mines	Yavapai	Pending Funding	\$20,000
<b>C</b>	North Butte Mines	Pinal	Pending Funding	\$12,000
<b>D</b>	Florence Area Mines	Pinal	Pending Funding	\$25,000
<b>E</b>	Peralta Trail Area	Pinal	Pending Funding	\$7,500
<b>F</b>	Congress Area	Yavapai	Pending Funding	\$20,000
<b>G</b>	Cerro Colorado Area	Pima	Pending Funding	\$30,000

<b>H</b>	Mammoth Area	Pinal	Pending Funding	\$20,000
<b>I</b>	Aravaipa Area	Graham	Pending Funding	\$20,000
<b>J</b>	Gleeson Area	Cochise	Pending Funding	\$10,000
<b>K</b>	Tip Top Mine	Yavapai	Construction January 2003	\$4,500
	<b>Total</b>			<b>\$194,000</b>